

## **Fact Sheet: The Benefits of a Family Friendly Workplace Paid Sick Days and Family & Medical Leave**

**CALIFORNIA WORKING FAMILIES POLICY SUMMIT  
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### **EVERYONE BENEFITS**

Family friendly workplaces improve the health and well-being of our families, communities, and workplaces. Guaranteeing paid sick days and family and medical leave benefits everyone.

#### ***The Benefits to Family Health***

- Children recover faster when parents are present to help care for them.<sup>1</sup>
- Parents with paid time off are over 5 times more likely to care for their children when they are sick.<sup>2</sup>
- Especially when leave is paid, parents who take time off to care for a seriously ill child experience positive effects on their child's physical and emotional health, and an improvement in their own emotional health.<sup>3</sup>
- When workers take leave to care for an elder family member, stays in nursing homes and residential care facilities are delayed or avoided.<sup>4</sup>
- Women who take pregnancy disability leave experience positive health benefits, including a reduced risk of Caesarean section, increased breastfeeding, and reduced post-partum depression.<sup>5</sup>
- Parental leave has significant positive effects on the health of young children, maternal health, and fathers' involvement with their babies.<sup>6</sup>

#### ***The Benefits to Public Health***

- More than a third of flu cases are transmitted in schools and workplaces.<sup>7</sup>
- Lack of paid sick days contributed to the spread of the H1N1 virus in the workplace in 2009.<sup>8</sup>
- Staying at home when infected could reduce the number of people impacted by pandemic influenza by 15-34%.<sup>9</sup>
- Paid sick days would reduce the likelihood of outbreaks of stomach flu in nursing homes.<sup>10</sup>
- More than half of all foodborne illness outbreaks in the U.S. occur in restaurants.<sup>11</sup> More than 63% of all restaurant workers in the U.S. report cooking and serving food while sick.<sup>12</sup>

#### ***The Benefits to Economic Security***

- 79% of the lowest wage workers lack access to paid sick days.<sup>13</sup>
- Half of working mothers, and 75 percent of low-wage working mothers, lose pay when they stay home with a sick child.<sup>14</sup>

## Fact Sheet: Paid Sick Days and Family & Medical Leave Labor Project for Working Families

- One in six workers report that they or a family member have been fired, suspended or disciplined for missing work due to illness.<sup>15</sup>
- 65% of senior caregivers and 52% of parents of young children are concerned the economy will cause them to make decisions that negatively impact the quality of care for their loved ones.<sup>16</sup>
- Families that carry the financial burden for their children and elderly loved ones pay on average \$16,457 annually, making up about 19% of their annual household income.<sup>17</sup>
- The use of California's Paid Family Leave program greatly increased wage replacement during family leaves for workers in low-quality jobs.<sup>18</sup>

### ***The Benefits to Business***

- Statistics from California's paid family leave program show that 96% of program participants return to the same job after leave.<sup>19</sup>
- Employees with paid sick days are less likely to leave their jobs.<sup>20</sup>
- The cost to business of high turnover is significant – and can be avoided by retaining committed and productive employees who need leave.<sup>21</sup>
- Employees working sick (called presenteeism) costs employers 180 billion dollars annually, significantly more than the annual cost of absenteeism.<sup>22</sup>
- Businesses covered by the federal Family and Medical Leave law cite no noticeable effect on their business productivity, profitability, or growth.<sup>23</sup>
- Most employers report that the California Paid Family Leave program had either a positive effect or no noticeable effect on productivity, profitability, turnover and morale.<sup>24</sup>
- Since San Francisco's paid sick leave law was enacted, both job growth and business growth in San Francisco have consistently been greater than in the five neighboring counties of the Bay Area.<sup>25</sup>

### **END NOTES**

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<sup>1</sup> Mark A. Schuster, Paul J. Chung, Marc N. Elliott et. al., *Perceived Effects of Leave from Work and the Role of Paid Leave Among Parents of Children with Special Health Care Needs*, 99 J. Am. Med. Ass'n 698 (2009).

<sup>2</sup> Human Impact Partners & San Francisco Department of Public Health, *A Health Impact Assessment of the California Healthy Families, Healthy Workplaces Act of 2008* (2008).

<sup>3</sup> Id.

<sup>4</sup> Courtney Harold Van Houtven & Edward C. Norton, *Informal Care and Health Care Use of Older Adults*, 23 J. Health Econ. 1159 (2004).

<sup>5</sup> Workplace Flexibility 2010 & Berkeley Center on Health Economic & Family Security, *Family Security Insurance: A New Foundation for Economic Security* (2010).

<sup>6</sup> The David and Lucile Packard Foundation, *Newborn Family Leave: Effects on Children, Parents, and Business* (2009).

## Fact Sheet: Paid Sick Days and Family & Medical Leave Labor Project for Working Families

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<sup>7</sup> Supra note 2.

<sup>8</sup> Kevin Miller & Robert Drago, Sick at Work: Infected Employees in the Workplace During the H1N1 Pandemic (2010).

<sup>9</sup> Supra note 2.

<sup>10</sup> Supra note 2.

<sup>11</sup> Supra note 2.

<sup>12</sup> Restaurant Opportunities Centers United, Serving While Sick: High Risks & Low Benefits for the Nation's Restaurant Workforce, and Their Impact on the Consumer (2010).

<sup>13</sup> Heidi Hartmann, The Healthy Families Act: Impacts on Workers, Businesses, the Economy, and Public Health, Testimony to the U.S. Senate Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions (2007).

<sup>14</sup> Id.

<sup>15</sup> Tom W. Smith, Paid Sick Days: A Basic Labor Standard for the 21st Century (2008).

<sup>16</sup> Care.com & Nat'l Ass'n of Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies, State of Care Index (2009).

<sup>17</sup> Id.

<sup>18</sup> Eileen Appelbaum & Ruth Milkman, Leaves That Pay: Employer and Worker Experiences with Paid Family Leave in California (2011).

<sup>19</sup> Ruth Milkman, New Data on Paid Family Leave (2008).

<sup>20</sup> Vicky Lovell, Valuing Good Health: An Estimate of Costs and Savings for the Healthy Families Act (2005).

<sup>21</sup> Arindrajit "Arin" Dube & Ethan Kaplan, Paid Family Leave in California: An Analysis of Costs and Benefits (2002).

<sup>22</sup> Jodie Levin-Epstein, Presenteeism and Paid Sick Days (2005).

<sup>23</sup> Jane Waldfogel, Family and Medical Leave: Evidence from the 2000 Surveys (2001).

<sup>24</sup> Supra note 18.

<sup>25</sup> Drum Major Institute for Public Policy, Paid Sick Leave Does Not Harm Business Growth or Job Growth (2010).